

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



3600 Block Georgia Avenue, East



3600 Block Georgia Avenue, East



Quincy Street Row Houses

Georgia Avenue is one of the city's most significant and historic avenues. As a traffic artery, it carries thousands of commuters in and out of the city daily. As a commercial corridor, it provides goods and services to the residents in the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Yet today, the avenue is in need of revival. With a distinctive residential building stock and a strong housing market, the area today still experiences pockets of crime, vacant and deteriorating commercial and residential properties, a steady increase of automobile-oriented businesses, and declining infrastructure and public realm.

The study area for Georgia Avenue starts at Decatur Street to the north and extends south to Euclid Street near Howard University. The Revitalization Strategy is a framework to guide growth and development, as well as preserve and enhance the quality of life in neighborhoods along the corridor. The Revitalization Strategy imparts the opportunity to re-energize and re-cast Georgia Avenue as the thriving, beautiful avenue that it has been in the recent past. The Revitalization Strategy seeks to build upon historic assets such as the unique cultural and architectural environment, as well as new assets, such as the Georgia Avenue-Petworth Metro Station.

The Revitalization Strategy's assessment and recommendations are organized by five primary themes:

- 1) Market Economics
- 2) Land Use and Zoning
- 3) Housing
- 4) Transportation
- 5) Urban Design and Public Realm

The overall **economic and land use** strategy for revitalization is several fold: encourage retail development that brings a desired mix of quality neighborhood serving businesses and services; strengthen existing viable and desirable businesses; target blocks with high vacancies and underutilized land for redevelopment; seek new residential development that offers a mix of housing and ownership types; create an overlay zone to stabilize existing desired businesses and encourage redevelopment; bring non-conforming apartment buildings in the R-4 Zone into conformance through rezoning; explore Main Street strategies for selected areas; explore shared parking or other parking management resources to meet parking demand generated by retail and transit uses; and investigate market incentives to assist existing and new businesses, such as Tax Increment Financing and façade improvement programs.

The study area's **housing** stock, while of distinctive character, is aging and there are pockets of housing units that are dilapidated and in need of repair. Such situations present risks of fire, vandalism, and the perception that the area is "unclean and unsafe" which deters new homebuyers and private investment and sustains neighborhood deterioration. Recommended housing strategies include the creation of a Target Block Initiative (TBI) to initially target one or two neighborhood blocks with significant deterioration and focus public and private financial and technical assistance to homeowners to improve their properties. The outcome of the TBI is a catalyst for improvement by making visible changes to a targeted area. Another housing strategy is to accelerate and expand the District's Home Again Initiative to convert abandoned properties into quality affordable homes, and to rehabilitate commercial properties along the corridor. It is also recommended that a task force, led by the District's Housing Authority, be established to further study and propose actions to improve and better integrate the Park Morton apartment complex into the neighborhood.

Regarding **transportation**, the Plan recommends improvements in areas of parking, transit service, the pedestrian environment and the possibility of an improved environment for bicycles. Traffic is managed better through coordinated signalization, streetscape improvements, and roadway design modifications. New parking is suggested for small lots in locations all along the study area, and streetscape improvements are suggested to improve the pedestrian environment particularly at the Georgia Avenue/New Hampshire Avenue intersection and the Georgia Avenue/ Kansas Avenue intersection. Changes such as bulb-outs to decrease the width of intersections, more visible cross walks, landscaped medians and improved lighting are some of the recommended future steps. The Plan also suggests improving transit access by increasing the frequency of trains to the Georgia Avenue-Petworth Metro Station and extending Yellow line service to the station as well.

To enhance **urban design** and **the public realm**, the Revitalization Strategy recommends building upon the assets of the existing high quality residential fabric; introduce redevelopment in strategic locations to catalyze improvements; make adjacent neighborhoods more identifiable by creating local "centers" along the street; and create a more distinctive public environment through streetscape improvements and public art commemorating African American history and culture.

The Revitalization Strategy also breaks the corridor into four neighborhood areas: 1) Upshur, 2) Petworth-Metro, 3)

Park View/ Park Morton, and 4) Pleasant Plains. Issues specific to each neighborhood area are identified. Each neighborhood area also has an accompanying series of overall and specific recommendations relating to the five themes, such as an opportunity for a "Home Again" project. A corresponding set of potential redevelopment sites is attached to each section, showing possible redevelopment opportunities, lot sizes, possible uses and parking capacity.

Finally, the Georgia Avenue Revitalization Strategy includes an implementation section, "Action Plan," to initiate and monitor the actions and implementation of the plan recommendations. The Action Plan specifies each issue and corresponding action item on a block-by-block basis. The priority, location, current zoning, responsible public and private partners, and projected completion dates are also listed for each action item. While the District government will manage public investment, much of the Revitalization Strategy's success hinges on the behavior of the private sector, as well as close partnership with citizens, property owners and other stakeholders.



Georgia Avenue Study Area